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Pennsylvania's First Aquaculture Census Catches \$7.6 Million in Sales

Pennsylvania's first census of aquaculture revealed interesting facts—and confirmed some expectations—about one of agriculture's fastest growing sectors. The 1998 Census of Aquaculture, conducted by the Pennsylvania Agricultural Statistics Service (PASS), provides a wide variety of data relating to methods of production, sources of water, sales and sale outlets, cooperative agreements and contracts, sizes of operation based on sales, and aquaculture distributed for restoration or conservation purposes.

This special census provided the first detailed picture of the aquaculture industry and revealed that:

- < The total value of aquaculture products sold in Pennsylvania in 1998 was \$7.6 million. Food fish (e.g., catfish, trout, walleye, tilapia, hybrid striped bass, etc.) accounted for 79 percent of the aquaculture sales and 84 percent of the farms producing aquaculture.
- < There were 776 freshwater surface acres used for aquaculture production in Pennsylvania in 1998. Groundwater was the leading source of water for aquaculture production, followed by on-farm surface water.
- < Flow through tanks and raceways were the methods most often used for aquaculture production. Ponds were also a very popular method.
- < Trout were the most abundant foodfish grown in the Keystone State with 38 farms having total sales of \$5.4 million. Forty-three percent of the foodsize trout and ninety-two percent of stocker sized trout were sold to fee fishing and recreational operations. Thirty-five percent of the foodsize trout were sold directly to consumers.
- < Catfish sales accounted for \$44,000 in foodfish sales in Pennsylvania in 1998. Fathead minnows made up the majority of baitfish sales.
- < Food fish growers in Pennsylvania showed average sales of \$140 thousand dollars per farm in 1998.
- < In 1998, Pennsylvania distributed 224,000 bass and 9,414,000 trout for restoration or conservation purposes. Also, over 74 million walleye, mostly fry, were distributed in the Keystone State's waterways.

The census of aquaculture contains information about food fish, baitfish, mollusks, crustaceans, ornamental fish, sport/game fish, algae and sea vegetables, and other fish and aquacultural products. To discover the wealth of aquaculture and other agricultural statistics available from the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS), including hundreds of commodity production and price reports, or to review a full catalog of NASS products and services, visit the NASS Home Page at www.usda.gov/nass/. The 1998 Census of Aquaculture, 1997 Census of Agriculture reports, State and County Profiles, Highlights, and a slide show presenting *Quick Facts* are accessible by clicking "Census of Agriculture." For other information, e-mail nass@nass.usda.gov or call 1-800-727-9540. To order a printed copy of any NASS report, call the NASS Order Desk at 1-800-999-6779.